



# Southern Nevada Graffiti Coalition

The Quarterly Publication of Southern  
Nevada's Official Graffiti Fighting Alliance

Fall 2011

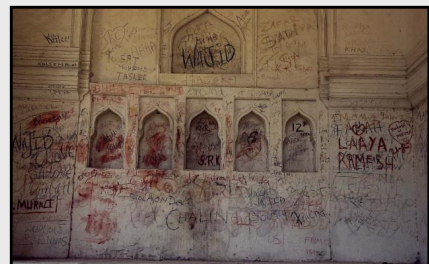
*Southern Nevada United Against Graffiti Vandalism*

## Monuments Under Attack

The goal of graffiti vandals is the promotion of themselves, their "tag crew," or a specific or general cause through property destruction. With this in mind it is easy to understand that graffiti vandals want to destroy as much property as they possibly can. They also want to shock the community by causing graffiti damage that is highly costly or offensive. One of the means by which they accomplish this is the defacement of valued and historically significant locations.

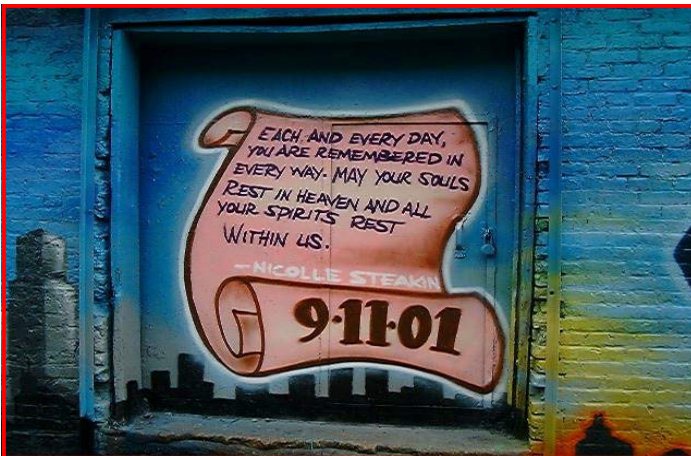
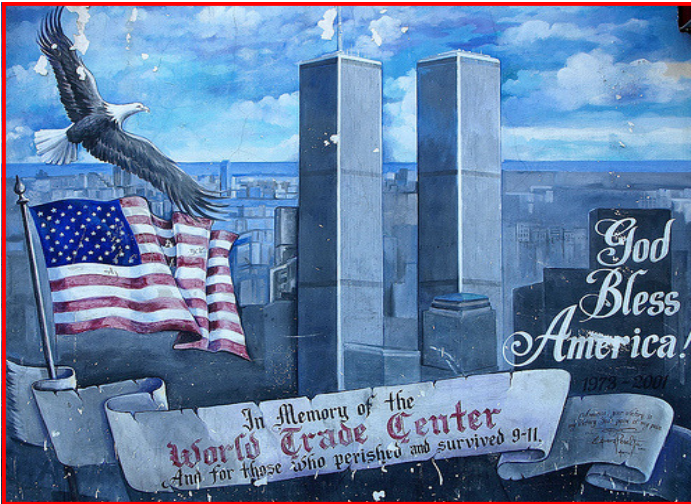
Here in Nevada we have recently seen several graffiti attacks on culturally significant and high profile locations. These incidents have involved numerous locations including Red Rock Canyon, Mt. Charleston, The Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and the famous "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas" sign located on the Las Vegas Strip. While the majority of these incidents have resulted in the identification and arrest of the vandal, it is clear that many local vandals aspire to gain notoriety by defacing important locations.

This ongoing, nationwide trend is a key element of graffiti vandalism in general: acquiring notoriety by means of placing offensive graffiti to sensitive locations. This is what makes Nevada's newly passed graffiti law so important. Effective October 1st any graffiti to a protected site, regardless of damage amount, will be a felony offense and the vandal will be subject to increased penalties and prison.





# In Remembrance September 11th, 2001 *Never Forget*



## **GRAFFITI GUIDE**

### **To Report a Graffiti Vandal in Progress:**

**Call 911. Do not approach the vandal.**

**Be a good witness for responding officers.**

**Assist the officers with information if/when requested once the vandal is in custody.**

### **To Request Graffiti Removal on Public Property:**

**Call the *Southern Nevada Graffiti Hotline* at 455-4509.**

### **For Graffiti Removal on Non-Public Property:**

**For graffiti on utility boxes you can contact the company which owns the box.**

**For your safety do not attempt to remove graffiti from these boxes yourself.**

**Graffiti removal on private property is the responsibility of the property owner.**

**If an arrest is made the owner may receive full restitution as ordered by the court.**

**If the graffiti is on property managed by a home owner's association the HOA is responsible for removal of the graffiti. The HOA must also make the police report.**

### **To Receive Free Graffiti Removal Supplies for your Neighborhood:**

**Contact the county or city where you reside. Often these supplies can be provided if you and your neighbors are able and willing to remove graffiti in your neighborhood.**

### **To Have a Police Report made:**

**Stop by your nearest police station.**

**You must own the property to complete a police report.**

**When a report is made a detective will be assigned the case for investigation.**

### **To Report a Known Graffiti Vandal:**

**Contact your local police department.**

**To remain anonymous you can call or submit a tip online to CRIME STOPPERS at (702) 385-5555 or [www.crimestoppersofnv.com](http://www.crimestoppersofnv.com).**

**Tips leading to a felony arrest or an indictment processed through Crime Stoppers may result in a cash award.**





## 71 year Old Grandfather Arrested for being a Tagger



71-year-old Charles Ignatius Wesley was arrested for being a graffiti tagging. He was arrested after leaving his tag on hundreds of telephone poles in Pinellas County FL over the past five years. The initials *SLA* had been popping up on phone poles in the area since at least 2006. Pinellas County Sheriff's deputies originally thought the tag could be connected to the *Symbionese Liberation Army*, the left-wing radical group that made waves in the '70s by kidnapping heiress Patty Hearst.

In fact, the initials did have political meaning, but Wesley is no veteran of any pseudo-military units from the '70s. In fact, *SLA* stands for "Sane, Liberated Americas," a political party that likely counts Wesley as its only member. Wesley believes the party will take over the country once the economy completely falls. The 71-year-old claims the party was formed after he was appointed the 24th Elder by the Lord himself one night while he slept.

To spread his message he soon began spray-painting poles. Deputies finally caught up to him after witnesses saw him tagging a pole in a vacant lot Sunday. Wesley admitted responsibility for the hundreds of tagged poles and claimed he had marked six others that day. He was arrested on charges of criminal mischief and received a bond of \$5,000.

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## Norway Terrorist was a Graffiti Tagger

It has been reported that Anders Behring Breivik was a prolific graffiti vandal. Apparently Breivik was a well know graffiti tagger in Oslo Norway who used the tag name of "Morg."

As reported: *Breivik claims to have become one of Oslo's "most notable" street dancers and that by 14 his was the most recognizable graffiti "tag" in the capital. His abilities, he wrote, earned him the admiration of teenage girls but the wrath of his father, who never talked to him again after his son was caught by police.*

Breikik is reported to have stated: *"I was the most active tagger (graffiti artist) in Oslo as several people in the old school hip-hop community can attest to."*

## Graffiti Used to Gauge Progress of Local Schools

As the new school year begins many Clark County Public Schools are under pressure to perform. Some schools have struggled in the past in achieving high graduation rates and satisfactory academic performance.

It has been reported recently that at least one local high school is stressing school pride as a means to make the school more effective in all areas. One of the methods used is repainting areas of the school and cleaning it. The reason is that increased pride in the school will result in a better environment leading to better performance. This will prove effective as it has already been proven in other applications. A school covered in graffiti will not be an effective, or safe school. Pride in a school will make it safer, just as pride in a neighborhood makes it safer.



**Graffiti  
Reflects Poorly  
on a School, a  
Neighborhood,  
and a  
Community**

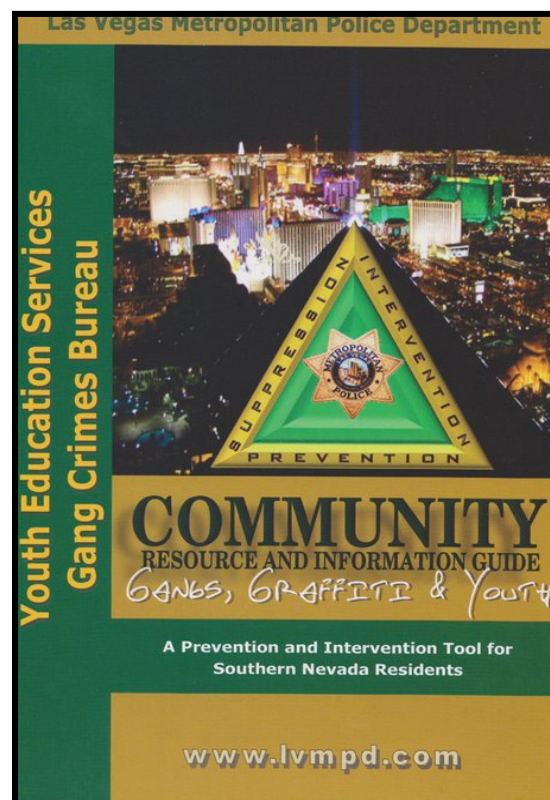
### Metro Releases the Community Resource and Information Guide on Gangs, Graffiti & Youth

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's ***Community Resource and Information Guide on Gangs, Graffiti & Youth*** is now available to the public.

This booklet is a valuable tool for parents, teachers and community leaders who deal with gangs and graffiti related issues with young people.

The book was created through a joint effort of Metro's Gang Crimes Bureau and Youth Education Services.

**For more information contact the  
LVMPD or go to [www.lvmpd.com](http://www.lvmpd.com).**





## Do Legal Art Walls Decrease Graffiti Vandalism? NO

Over the past decade numerous local businesses and art-based organizations have implemented locations that welcome the “art” of those involved in the placing of graffiti. This is often touted as a way to fight graffiti vandalism in our community. Those involved in graffiti vandalism refer to these locations as “legal walls.”

A legal wall is in fact “art” by definition. It is art because it is a creation of artistic expression that is welcomed. When this is placed to property where there is no permission then it is a criminal offense. If the owner of the property wishes to make a criminal complaint then the person responsible for it’s placement will be arrested and charged with *Placing Graffiti*, a crime in Nevada.

History has demonstrated clearly that graffiti vandals have no interest in “art,” they only have interest in vandalism. These legal walls may have a positive impact on an area, a business, a person, or a group. But they will not impact illegal graffiti vandalism. In fact, it may even attract vandals interested in defacing the newly placed artwork. This has occurred several times here in Southern Nevada which resulted in the artwork having to be removed. Legal art must be supported, but we cannot confuse legal art with illegal graffiti vandalism.

***Graffiti Is Not Art, and Art Is Not Graffiti. Art is placed with Permission, Graffiti Is Not***

**“GRAFFITI” as it’s Defined by Graffiti Vandals, must be Illegal. Graffiti Vandals have No Interest in Legal Art.**



***The Southern Nevada Graffiti Coalition is on:***





## Red Rock Vandalism Case Resolved

In 2010 extensive graffiti was discovered at Red Rock Canyon just west of Las Vegas. The graffiti defaced Native American pictographs and petro glyphs estimated at more than 1,000 years old. The case shocked the conscience of Las Vegans and is considered to be one the worst cases of graffiti vandalism in American history.



An intense investigation ensued and within three days a suspect was identified. A manhunt then occurred involving the LVMPD, the United States Marshals Service and agents from the Bureau of Land Management. On December 8th 2011 the suspect was arrested and charged with violating the Archeological Resource Protection Act. As a result the suspect, who was a juvenile, has been ordered to repay nearly \$24,000 in damages. He was also released after being in custody for approximately nine months and will be under federal supervision by a probation officer.

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**Our Next DARE Anti-Graffiti Art Contest is Coming Up Soon!**





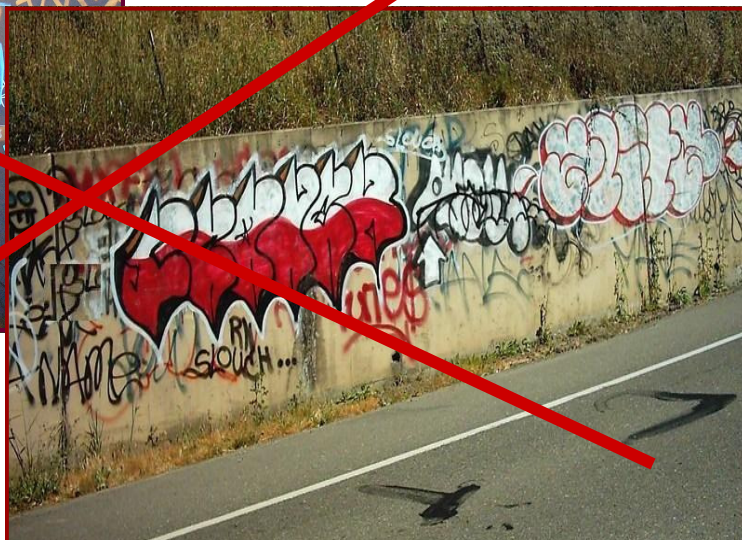
# GRAFFITI VANDALISM FACT: Unabated Graffiti Welcomes Crime!

It is a fact that unabated graffiti vandalism is a “welcome sign” for crime. Not just additional graffiti vandalism offenses, but crimes of various types. This includes crimes of violence.

Numerous studies have been conducted which provide evidence that rampant unabated graffiti vandalism serves as an invitation to the criminal element and is a catalyst for accelerated neighborhood decay.

It is important for citizens to realize that the most important action they can take in preventing graffiti vandalism is to remove it. If citizens are willing to remove the graffiti they can contact the Southern Nevada Graffiti Hotline at 455-4509 and request to become part of the Neighborhood Pride Zone program. They will then be provided paint and materials, including instructional videos on how to effectively keep their neighborhood graffiti-free. The program is free.

**Protect Your Neighborhood! Keep it Graffiti-Free!**



**REUSE**  
**REDUCE**  
**RECYCLE**



**Southern Nevada Graffiti Coalition**  
**Det. Scott Black (LVMPD), Executive Director**

